

What is Claimed:

1. A method for creating a multi-level business alliance of independent firms, the method comprising the steps of:

creating an alliance between a founding firm and at least one firm in a first level

5 based on predefined rules;

allowing the founding firm and the firm in the first level to use predefined rules to sign up at least one firm in a second level;

allowing the firm in the second level to use predefined rules to sign up at least one firm in a third level;

10 providing each firm in the multi-level business alliance the opportunity to access the resources of other firms in the alliance;

enabling firms in the multi-level business alliance to share revenue based on predefined rules; and

15 accepting firms in the multi-level business alliance that potentially provide a service that is desirable to alliance members.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of enabling firms of the multi-level business alliance to share revenue based on each firm's position in the multi-level alliance and based on relationships between the firm whose client is being served and
20 other firms that are in higher levels of the multi-level business alliance.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining the firm in the first level as a foundation firm.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of requiring that the foundation firm is not in a same geographical area as the founding firm.

5. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of allowing the foundation firm to be a predetermined size.

6. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of allowing a size of each foundation firm to vary from one geographical area to a next geographical area depending on a size of the founding firm in the same geographical area.

7. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of allowing multiple foundation firms in the same geographical area.

8. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of allowing the second level firm to be in the same geographical area as the founding firm or the foundation firm, and wherein the second level firm is smaller than the founding firm and the foundation firm.

9. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of allowing the second level firm to be in the same geographical area as the founding firm or the foundation firm, and wherein the second level firm is larger than the founding firm and the foundation firm.

5 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing the third level firm to be in the same geographical area as the second level firm that introduces the third level firm to the alliance, and wherein the third level firm is smaller than the signing second level firm.

10 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing the third level firm to be in the same geographical area as the second level firm that introduces the third level firm to the alliance, and wherein the third level firm is larger than the signing second level firm.

15 12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of using predefined criteria to determine each firm's levels in the alliance structure.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of using laws, in each jurisdiction where there is an alliance firm, to determine how revenue is shared among
20 the alliance firms.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of using laws, in each jurisdiction where there is an alliance firm, to determine whether revenue is shared among the alliance firms.

5 15. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of establishing how revenue should be shared based on criteria defined by some of the alliance firms.

16. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of establishing how revenue should be shared based on criteria defined by a third party.

10 17. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of establishing how revenue should be shared based on criteria defined by all of the alliance firms.

18. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

15 requiring each firm in the first level to pay the founding firm a licensing fee and wherein the firm in the first level and the founding firm share revenue based on a predetermined formula;

requiring each firm in the second level to pay a licensing fee to a parent firm in the first level and to the founding firm;

20 requiring each firm in the third level to pay a licensing fee to a parent in the second level that introduced the firm in the third level to the alliance, to a parent firm in

the first level that introduced the parent firm in the second level to the alliance, and to the founding.

19. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing alliance firms in
5 the first, second and third levels to share work and to establish an acceptable revenue sharing agreement.

20. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing alliance firms in
10 the first, second and third levels to refer clients to each other and to establish an acceptable referral agreement.

21. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of allowing alliance firms in
the first, second and third levels to refer clients to each other and to establish an
acceptable referral agreement, wherein the referral agreement requires that a portion of a
15 referral fee is paid to the founding firm.

22. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of allowing the founding firm
to provide a service to a client of a second firm in the alliance structure and allowing the
founding firm to use a predetermined formula to split a referral fee between the second
20 firm and parent firms in higher levels of the alliance structure that introduced the second firm to the alliance.

23. A method for creating a multi-level business alliance, the method comprising the steps of:

creating an alliance between a plurality of independent firms based on predefined rules, wherein the predefined rules determine each firm's position in the multi-level

5 business alliance;

providing each firm in the multi-level business alliance an opportunity to access the resources of other firms in the multi-level business alliance;

enabling at least two firms in the multi-level business alliance to share revenue based on a predefined formula; and

10 accepting only those firms in the multi-level business alliance that provide service that is desirable to alliance firms.

24. A method for creating a multi-level business alliance, the method comprising the steps of:

15 creating an alliance between a plurality of independent firms based on predefined rules, wherein the predefined rules determine each firm's position in the multi-level business alliance;

requiring each firm that is not in the highest level of the multi-level business alliance to pay a licensing fee, wherein predefined rules are used to divide the licensing
20 fee between parent firms in higher levels of the multi-level business alliance;

providing each firm in the multi-level business alliance the opportunity to access the resources of other firms in the multi-level business alliance;

sharing revenue among a plurality of firms based on a predefined formula; and
accepting firms to the multi-level business alliance to provide service that is
desirable to alliance firms.

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